

REMARKS

This communication responds to the Final Office Action dated March 22, 2011. Claims 1, 14, 22, 28, 33, 42, 48 and 55 are amended, claim 11 is canceled, and no claims are added herein. As a result, claims 1-10, 14-17, 21-29 and 31-59 are now pending in this application.

Unless otherwise stated herein, amendments to the claims have been made to clarify meaning, correct typographical errors, provide proper antecedent basis, and/or provide consistent terminology, and not for reasons related to patentability.

The Rejection of Claims Under § 103

Claims 1-8, 11, 14-17, 21-29, 31-45, 47-51, and 53-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Epinions.com (hereinafter, “Epinions”) in view of Petras et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2001/10047290, hereinafter “Petras”).

Claims 9-10, 46, 52 and 59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Epinions.com in view of Petras and in further view of Aho et al. (Data Structures and Algorithms) (hereinafter, “Aho”).

Since a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been properly established by the Final Office Action in each case, the rejection of these claims is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 14, 22, 28, 33, 42, 48 and 55:

Independent claim 1 has been amended to read in part, “deriving a community rating uniquely corresponding to a particular user by summing an individual feedback rating associated with the particular user and one or more individual feedback ratings associated with one or more users referred by the particular user to the online trading community” and “the individual feedback rating associated with each user being established based on votes from other users of the plurality of users of the online trading community.” Similar amendments have been made to independent claims 14, 22, 28, 33, 42, 48 and 55. These amendments are made to clarify meaning, and not for reasons related to patentability. Support for these amendments can be found at least in FIG. 2 of the Application, and at page 2 lines 8-22 and page 9 lines 5-23 of the specification. No new matter has thus been introduced.

It is respectfully submitted that Epinions does not teach or suggest the features **“deriving a community rating uniquely corresponding to a particular user by summing an individual feedback rating associated with the particular user and one or more individual feedback ratings associated with one or more users referred by the particular user to the online trading community”** and **“the individual feedback rating associated with each user being established based on votes from other users of the plurality of users of the online trading community”** as recited in amended independent claim 1.

In the “Response to Arguments” portion, the Final Office Action (on page 17) asserts, *“Examiner notes that the term aggregate, in the broadest reasonable interpretation, means to collect, combine, total, or sum and thus is not solely accomplished by the act of summing in the mathematical manner described by the Applicant in the arguments and with respect to figure 2.”* Independent claim 1 has been amended by replacing **“aggregating”** with **“summing”** to clarify meaning.

In the “Response to Arguments” portion, the Final Office Action (on page 18) goes on to equate “a user that the particular user trusts” (**“trusted user”**) of Epinions with a user referred by the particular user (**referred user**) as recited in claim 1. However, the Final Office Action does not point out and Applicants cannot find any portion of Epinions that discloses that a rating of the “trusted user” (who is trusted by the particular user) is established based on votes from other users of the community, and that the ratings of the “trusted users” may be summed to affect the rating of the particular user who trusts the “trusted users”. For example, Epinions merely discloses that the other users may provide responses indicating whether to trust **the particular user** (rather than the **“trusted user”**) of the review, and may indicate an approval level (e.g., “very useful”) to the individual review provided by **the particular user** (rather than by the **“trusted user”**).

As a matter of contrast, in amended independent claim 1, a community rating to a particular user is derived by **summing** an individual feedback rating to the particular user and one or more individual feedback ratings to one or more users referred by the particular user to the online trading community, and **the individual feedback rating associated with each user is established based on votes from other users of the plurality of users of the online trading community**. The approach of amended independent claim 1 is thus different from that of

Epinions. At least for this reason, Epinions does not teach or suggest the above-quoted features as recited in amended independent claim 1.

Neither Petras nor Aho cures this defect of Epinions. Accordingly, even when combined, Epinions, Petras, and Aho do not teach or suggest the above-quoted features as recited in amended independent claim 1.

The above argument presented with respect to amended independent claim 1 also applies to amended independent claims 14, 22, 28, 33, 42, 48 and 55, which have features similar to amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, the cited references (Epinions, Petras, and Aho) do not render amended independent claims 14, 22, 28, 33, 42, 48 and 55 obvious.

All dependent claims from these independent claims are also nonobvious, since any claim depending from a nonobvious independent claim is also nonobvious. *See* M.P.E.P. § 2143.03. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicants' representative at (612) 373-6966 to facilitate prosecution of this application. If necessary, please charge any additional fees or deficiencies, or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,

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